

# Family Factors as Correlates of Diet in Relatives of Colon Cancer Patients

Melanie K. Bean, PhD; Suzanne E. Mazzeo, PhD; Elizabeth Fries, PhD

---

**Objectives:** To examine family social support and closeness to the patient for their association with diet in first-degree relatives (FDRs) of colon cancer patients. **Methods:** Participants (N=98) were interviewed by telephone to assess study constructs. Multiple hierarchical regressions examined relationships among family factors and diet. **Results:** Family social support was associated with healthier diets, particularly fruits

and vegetables. However, FDRs closest to the cancer patient had less healthy diets. **Conclusions:** FDRs with close relationships to their family member with cancer may be in greatest need of dietary intervention. Diet is understudied in this high-risk population and warrants more investigation. **Key words:** family social support, first degree relatives, colon cancer, diet

*Am J Health Behav.* 2008;32(4):347-355

---